

**TEACHING VOCABULARY THROUGH KINESTHETIC  
ACTIVITIES TO KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS IN A PRIVATE  
INSTITUTION SEMILLERO DE AMOR**

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**Licenciatura en Bilingüismo**

**Pereira**

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**Classroom projected presented as a requirement to get the degree in Bilingual**

**Bachelor**

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### **Abstract**

Kinesthesia involves the ability to learn through body movements or by using the tactile sense. This classroom project aimed to teach vocabulary by using kinesthetic activities with kindergarten students. When students do not yet possess reading and writing skills, this kind of methodology can be an important tool for the students to learn vocabulary in a second language.

We implemented this classroom project in a kindergarten institution called Semillero de Amor located in Dosquebradas. Our sample population were five students whose ages ranged from five to six years old. We taught eight lessons, in which we obtained results which are divided in three specific sections, linguistic outcomes, students' responses, and professional growth. Based on the results, we concluded that kinesthetic activities can have a positive impact in early learners since the five students correctly pronounced and used in appropriate contexts the new vocabulary that we provided. Additionally, the activities we implemented increased the students' motivation, which we considered to be a crucial aspect of this classroom project.

### Resumen

Kinestesia integra la habilidad de aprender por medio de movimientos corporales o el sentido del tacto. Este proyecto de aula tuvo como objetivo enseñar vocabulario usando actividades kinestésicas con estudiantes de jardín. Cuando los estudiantes aún no poseen habilidades asociadas con la lectura y la escritura, este tipo de metodología puede ser una importante herramienta para aprender el vocabulario de una segunda lengua.

Nosotras implementamos este proyecto de aula en un jardín privado llamado Semillero de Amor ubicado en el municipio de Dosquebradas. Nuestra población de muestra fueron cinco estudiantes cuya edad variaba entre cinco y seis años. Nosotras implementamos ocho clases en las cuales obtuvimos resultados que fueron divididos en tres secciones específicas *Linguistic Outcomes Students' Responses and Professional Growth*. Con base a los resultados obtenidos concluimos que las actividades kinestésicas pueden tener un impacto positivo en estudiantes de edades tempranas dado que los cinco estudiantes pronunciaron y usaron correctamente en contexto el vocabulario enseñado. Adicionalmente, las actividades implementadas incrementaron la motivación de los estudiantes lo cual es considerado como un aspecto crucial en este proyecto de aula.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Justification	8
2.Objectives	12
2.1 Learning Objectives	12
2.1.1 General Objective.	12
2.1.2 Specific Objectives.	12
2.2 Teaching Objectives	12
2.2.1 General Objectives.	12
2.2.2 Specific Objectives	12
3. Theoretical Framework	13
3.1 Literature Review	13
3.2 Conceptual Framework	15
3.2.1 Vocabulary.	16
3.2.1.1 Vocabulary Acquisition.	16
3.2.1.2 Vocabulary Teaching.	17
3.2.1.3 Vocabulary in Colombia.	19
3.2.2 Kinesthetic Learning.	20
3.2.2.1 Total Physical Response.	21
3.2.2.2 Psychomotor Domain.	22
3.2.2.3 Kinesthesia in Colombia.	23
3.2.3 Content and Language Integrated Learning.	24
3.2.3.1 Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS).	24
3.2.3.2 Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP).	25
3.2.3.3 CLIL in Colombia.	26
4. Methodology	27
4.1 Context	27
4.2 Setting	27
4.3 Participants	27
4.3.1 Students.	27
4.3.2 Practitioners.	28
4.4 Instructional Design	28
4.5 Implementation	29

**TEACHING VOCABULARY THROUGH KINESTHETIC ACTIVITIES**

4.6 Assessment	30
4.7 Reflection	31
4.7.1 Observations.	31
4.7.2 Journals.	32
4.7.3 Students Artifacts.	32
5. Results	33
5.1 Linguistic Outcomes	33
5.2 Professional Growth	36
5.3 Students' Responses.	37
6.Reflection	40
7. Conclusion	41
8.Appendices	42
8.1 Appendix A	42
9. References	44

## 1. Justification

Vocabulary is an area of special interest in the field of ELT since it is strongly connected with the lexical knowledge which is the main base of language acquisition and language use. When children are involved into new vocabulary at early ages, they will be able to create their own meaning structure and vocabulary learning strategies, in this way, they will connect their previous knowledge and representations to new words and structures. Communication is the main objective of learning a language that is why it is essential to increase the lexical system in order for young learners to start using language and to achieve an effective communication. Vocabulary is defined by Ur (1996) as a group of words that are provided in students' L2, in which language variations such as meanings and uses, are included. Since 1880 vocabulary has been part of EFL lessons, changing through different approaches and methodologies and having different purposes that, nowadays, are more active and important as part of the development in the students' language learning. During the 18th century, vocabulary was taught through the grammar-translation method where the L1 was used as the base tool to understand the meanings of the L2. This method is evident when the professor provides a new vocabulary to his/her students in the target language and then the meaning of the words in their mother tongue. One of the techniques that grammar-translation method used in order to teach vocabulary is the bilingual vocabulary lists.

In the 19th century, the direct method appeared, changing the vocabulary teaching and setting aside the use of the L1 in EFL lessons. The new words and its meanings were taught in the target language and, in this way, translation was discontinued. The following methods (natural approach, audio-lingual method,



## TEACHING VOCABULARY THROUGH KINESTHETIC ACTIVITIES

communicative method) minimized the role of the vocabulary in English classes until the lexical approach was developed and vocabulary started to be taught in English lessons again. Today, vocabulary is perceived as an important skill to learn a second language and it is developed in the new approaches, methodologies, and techniques such as CLIL, CBI, TPR.

In Colombia, in 2006 a bilingual project, called Plan Nacional de Inglés was presented, in which vocabulary was taught implicitly to beginner learners through topics such as family, behaviors, routines, etc. written in *Guia 22 El Reto*. In this project, English is developed in an organized way, where English teachers could find topics depending on the level of their students. In 2016, designers, researchers, and teachers agree that the bilingual Colombian project needs a change in its structure and methodology since *Guia 22* was not clear enough and did not contain all the subjects that a learner needs in order to develop the four macro-skills. For that reason, suggested curriculum was created from six to eleven grade. Vocabulary focus as part of EFL lessons, based on the new standards given by the *Ministerio de Educación* (MEN), as an essential tool that helps the understanding of the topics and contents. At the beginning of 2017, the second part of the suggested curriculum was presented where transition to five grade are involved. In this part, four performance indicators are taken into account (saber, saber hacer, saber ser, saber aprender). In the first indicator (saber) vocabulary is part of it where students must identify and recognize the words related to the content and topic.

Although there are many official Colombian documents about bilingual education in early stages, there are not clear indications about which is the most appropriate methodology regarding the implementation of bilingual education plans in

primary schools. There is not a reference that leads parents, teachers, and administrators to understand the benefits of bilingual education in childhood, and why it should be taught. In Pereira, studies have been developed where teaching vocabulary is taken into account as the main problem with different solutions such as the implementation of TPR activities, movies, storytelling, music, etc. In “The Implementation of Songs to Promote Vocabulary Learning in the Primary Classroom” by Betancur, Gutierrez, Florez (2016), showed that vocabulary is taught in traditional ways, such as grammar translation, and institutions do not take into consideration different strategies, activities, techniques to teach new words, on the contrary, translation is common at the moment to teach vocabulary. Betancur, Gutierrez, Florez (2016) suggests that the use of music to teach vocabulary in an EFL class is a good strategy since students are exposed to the target language, and the songs provide a variety of lexicon items that are useful for students.

Our study of different researchers and our experiences as observers in Colombia has pointed to a series of difficulties regarding the way in which English has been taught in the early stages. Even though a series of documents have been presented, such as the suggested curriculum presented this year, it has not been implemented by the institutions since it is a recent project and the institutions do not have clear information of how to adapt this guide to their context and the students’ necessities. For this reason, it was necessary the implementation of different learning styles, such as kinesthetic learning, and creative techniques in order to avoid the use of traditional methods as translation and repetition, and also, to take into consideration the new standards provided by the MEN (2017) which includes standards with a sequence and suggested topics.

## TEACHING VOCABULARY THROUGH KINESTHETIC ACTIVITIES

Therefore, the development of this classroom project has as its main purpose to explore the effects that kinesthetic activities can have in early learners regarding vocabulary learning. Due to the information already mentioned, it is considered necessary to implement non-traditional strategies that help students to enhance their performance in their learning process and to facilitate the second language development through the presentation of vocabulary. This study aims to provide a new perspective on the use of different learning styles such as kinesthetic learning and the use of the new standards through creative activities that motivate learners to be part of their own learning process. This classroom project was implemented in a private kindergarten school in Dosquebradas called *Semillero de Amor* during 8 lessons. Since its fundamental aim is the implementation of kinesthetic activities taking into consideration the *Mallas de Aprendizaje* from pre-school to five grade, the classes contain not only the new vocabulary but also content. Thus, students could connect the new words with the topics seen and with activities that involve creative techniques in which students can use their psychomotor movements to learn in a different way the new vocabulary provided by the practitioners. Vocabulary will be taught considering the suggested curriculum facilitating the kindergarten students understanding, by making them connect the new vocabulary to the content and physical movements with the meaning and use of the new words.

## **2.Objectives**

### **2.1 Learning Objectives**

#### **2.1.1 General Objective.**

- To use and understand new vocabulary in the second language

#### **2.1.2 Specific Objectives.**

- To identify words related to environment, animals, emotions
- To relate sounds and images, colors and shapes with the vocabulary associated with these.
- To relate psychomotor movements and body language with the new vocabulary

### **2.2 Teaching Objectives**

#### **2.2.1 General Objectives.**

- To teach vocabulary through kinesthetic activities

#### **2.2.2 Specific Objectives**

- To observe the effectiveness of kinesthetic activities for teaching vocabulary.
- To design English Lessons based on the new standards provided by the *MEN (2017)*
- To teach vocabulary through content that helps learners to understand certain topics such as environment and values.

### 3. Theoretical Framework

#### 3.1 Literature Review

In language teaching is important to take into consideration all the necessities of our students and their learning styles. For that reason, has been decided to see the teaching language in a different way since the goals of our study is to find enough evidence that shows how language can be learned by using innovative strategies that include activities such as dancing, acting or painting. Although language is compound by many rules related to grammar and pronunciation, for example, the main objective is to find an appropriate alternative to make language flexible in the way we teach it and the students learn it, through kinesthesia that is defined by Gardner (1991) as the learning style which corresponds to with the use of body movements in order to communicate. The activities involved in this learning style are associated with acting out, role plays, and also, the use of real objects. It is seen that activities that involve physical movements tend to engage students in a different way to learn any subject.

To begin with, some authors have been analyzing the effects of the use of games to facilitate the learning process and the understanding of the students. “Investigating the Effects of Authentic Childhood Games in Teaching English” by Hursen and Salaz (2016) is a study that aims to validate the use of games to teach language since a natural and joyful context allow children to develop their language skills in a more effective way. This investigation was carried out in Turkey Nicosia, Cyprus in a kindergarten institution in which forty-three children participated. Children were divided into two groups, the control, and the experimental group. In the experimental group, topics were taught through games, whereas in the control group topics were taught through

## TEACHING VOCABULARY THROUGH KINESTHETIC ACTIVITIES

traditional strategies. The results of this study showed that the implementation of games increased the lexical range and the motivation of the early childhood learners.

Moreover, it was evidenced that teachers gain a better classroom management by using games that are designed and implemented based on the own necessities of the students and their context. This investigation contributes to our idea since it is necessary to consider that children learn more easily playing and having fun, for that reason the use of games and kinesthetic activities are strongly related to increasing not only vocabulary knowledge but also motivation and participation.

As in the first study, the results were positive in the use of games inside the classroom, in the second study similar findings can be seen, but in this case with the implementation of the TPR (Total Physical Response) approach. Several authors agree that the use of real context in language teaching environments is fundamental for the learners to learn and understand new vocabulary and the use of those new words.

"Teaching English Vocabulary to Third Graders through the Application of the Total Physical Response Method" by Muñoz & Valencia (2011), is a research that was conducted in a public school in Pereira, Colombia in a third grade with thirty two students (fourteen females, eighteen males) where the researchers observed the class and, after that, they conducted an English class identifying the main problems and creating strategies to improve the English skills using vocabulary lessons based on TPR activities. The results showed the importance and benefits of the use of TPR in English classes, children respond more easily to body responses rather than verbal activities.

"As the classes progressed, the children demonstrated that they knew more about the language to respond and act out the commands given by the teacher." (Muñoz & Valencia, 2011, p.58). Through the research and the process, children learned new

vocabulary and they understood the meaning thanks to the real context provided by the teachers.

To conclude, the main purpose of this Literature Review is to present evidence of how kinesthetic activities such as games or approaches as TPR can help young learners in their vocabulary development through physical movement and not only through traditional learning such as listening instructions or watching demonstrations. Although the two researchers were developed in different countries, both have similar findings. The studies are relevant for our classroom project since, similar to kinesthesia, TPR and the use of games in language classroom involve body language showing that there always exists a close connection between the mind and the body and, for that reason, it is considered for this study to take advantage of the facility of children to develop physical activities to develop their language skills such as their lexical range.

### **3.2 Conceptual Framework**

In order to develop this research, is considered fundamental the understanding of the main concepts that guide this study to familiarize the reader with the basis of this classroom project. With this in mind, in this section will be defined two essential concepts through several authors whose researchers contribute to our research project. Vocabulary is seen by Ur (1996) Halliwell (2002), Scrivener (2011) not only as a group of words but as structures with multiple uses and meaning. Finally, Kinesthetic Learning is defined by Barker (1979), Gardner (1983), Fleming & Mills (1992) as the ability to learn through physical movements and the connection of the tactile materials with the new vocabulary. At the end of each concept, researchers will provide their own definition based on the author's interpretations mentioned.

### **3.2.1 Vocabulary.**

Vocabulary is the first knowledge that L2 students start to learn in order to acquire a second language. Ur (1996) defined vocabulary as the set of words that professors teach in the foreign language, however, it is necessary to take into account that vocabulary is not just single words, there are also multi-words and idioms which meaning cannot be defined analyzing the component words. Additionally, Halliwell (2002) stated that teaching vocabulary in primary level is fundamental to foreign learners since is about learning more than words, another key point that Halliwell provides is the connection between the network and the users' language helping to understand and learn the language. As Ur said that vocabulary is more than single words, Scrivener (2011) argues that these words are extremely connected with the lexical part, that means the internal database, where people can use all the words that they already learned and construct new phrases, sentences, clauses using their grammar knowledge. With this in mind, Vocabulary more than a series of words and structures is the connection that language learners can make with the lexical system that they already have, in this way, vocabulary is fundamental in order for the students create their own words system and meaning connections.

#### **3.2.1.1 Vocabulary Acquisition.**

As it is essential to explore the term vocabulary and the contribution of the authors already mentioned regarding this concept, it is also important to highlight the process by which learners achieve this knowledge. Meara (1980) argues that when learners are exposed to new vocabulary they develop a series of associations and



connections, achieving in this way a reorganization in their meaning system through each new word they learn. Vocabulary learning is not a goal that can be achieved immediately. Schmitt (2000) suggests that learners must go through a process in which the input is fundamental and is commonly connected with the receptive skills associated with listening and speaking in order for the learners to understand new words with their own association and interpretation. Vocabulary acquisition is also defined by Agustín (2011) as a fundamental procedure which starts at the moment that learners recognize new words in the second language in order to create a meaning system through the morphosyntactic structure and the recognition of words classification such as noun, verbs, adverbs, adjectives. Based on the contributions of these authors, vocabulary acquisition could be defined as a process, in which language learners explore and associate new words with their first language and also with their perception of meaning for the new vocabulary. It is important to bear in mind that when we talk about vocabulary acquisition, it is not based on systematic memorization but on a process in which the students can connect the new vocabulary with its meaning and the students' individual interpretation. Taking in mind that vocabulary is one of the first knowledge that students acquire in a new language, it is necessary to know how to teach it.

### **3.2.1.2 Vocabulary Teaching.**

In order to have a success vocabulary acquisition it is necessary to follow a series of steps at the moment to teach new words in the class. Ur (1996) argues that to achieve the main objective in a vocabulary class, teachers must take into consideration first the form, in other words, pronunciation and spelling, where learners have to know how the word sounds and how looks. The second step is the grammar part where

## TEACHING VOCABULARY THROUGH KINESTHETIC ACTIVITIES

learners will see how the word is connected with others; it is important that the grammar part will be taught at the same time that the base form. Collocations and aspects of meanings are other aspects that we need to take in mind in order to teach vocabulary. In the same way, Harmer (1998) claimed that it is fundamental first of all to introduce the vocabulary, he points out that at the moment to introduce new words in the classroom teachers can be sure that some of their students will know some words they are asking them to focus on. Vocabulary teaching must start by showing drawings, pictures, mimics, and so on, and the lesson must focus in the practice of the new vocabulary to make students think about word meaning, particularly in context. Another good way to motivate students to use the vocabulary is by implementing games. “Pictionary”, “call my bluff”, and “charades” for example, are effective games to implement in English classes in which students are challenged to use vocabulary to interact with their partners in a fun way. Apart from the games that can be implemented in a ESL classroom, is important also to mention strategies and methods that can be useful in these contexts. Thornbury (2002) presents different strategies in a vocabulary class where the most common is the translation method. Despite this method is the most direct route to a word's meaning, an over-reliance of translation may mean that learners fail to develop an independent L2 lexicon since they always access to their L1 lexis to define L2 vocabulary, rather than thinking in the definition itself. An alternative to translation is a set of concrete objects such as realia, pictures and demonstrations. This technique is known as the Direct Method. Another useful method is TPR which promotes initial immersion in a high quantity of comprehensible input. To put it in another way, Teaching vocabulary is the way in which teachers introduce new words to the students' lexicon. In order for the students to understand and interpret the new vocabulary, it is

fundamental for the teacher to take into consideration that the materials have to be highly connected with the new words and also with reality and, in this way, students can connect their first language meaning system with the new words they are learning in the target language. Also, it is essential to connect the new words with spelling, pronunciation and also grammatical structures during the lessons to facilitate to the students make use of this new vocabulary. To have a wide understanding of what vocabulary teaching is, it is necessary to look how vocabulary is developed in our context, in other words how is vocabulary applied in Colombia.

### **3.2.1.3 Vocabulary in Colombia.**

Based on the new curricula and syllabi proposed by the Ministry of Education in 2016, English classes in Colombia take into consideration Vocabulary Focus as part of EFL lessons, MINEDUCACION (2016), says that the use of vocabulary activities help to the students to develop their language skills allow them to produce productive skills. Also, it is important that teachers consider the use of different didactic materials and games such as flashcards, realia, bingo, crosswords in order to do easily the understanding and comprehension of the new vocabulary. Similarly, Gardner (2009) agrees in the correct use of didactic materials using authentic sources written for English native speakers to immerse Colombian students in English contexts and to understand more easily the components of the language such as style or idiomatic expressions. To teach vocabulary in a Colombian university program, it is normal to use textbooks that allow students to practice important grammar and vocabulary in both spoken and written contexts. Depending on the career, students present some interest in vocabulary related to their studies. For that reason, vocabulary is taught through a series

of lists with certain vocabulary that students use to connect it with grammar and content-based courses. On the other hand, Cardenas (2001) mentioned that vocabulary is being taught in a wrong way due to a set of factors that do not allow students to develop correctly the acquisition of new words. Some of these errors are the use of inappropriate vocabulary in certain situations, the use of vocabulary in the wrong level, and the use of very technical words to teach and define vocabulary. In order to overcome this situation, it is necessary to consider simplify form and vocabulary, provide an idioms list and create a frequency to use the new vocabulary in the class. Since this study is focalized in teaching vocabulary by physical movement, it is also essential to explore the kinesthetic learning concept through some authors' perceptions.

### **3.2.2 Kinesthetic Learning.**

At present, it is accepted the assumption that exists seven different kinds of intelligence instead of only mathematical and linguistic learning, this thought developed by Gardner (1983), changed the paradigm that all students can learn by providing them the information in the same way and using the same materials. In this theory, we can find that people, despite can have a combination of learning styles, they maintain a preference in the way they learn. For that reason, it is considered fundamental to explore these types of intelligence and find the method to include them in the teaching exercise since the most important aspect of this labor is to facilitate to students the understanding and also motivate them to be part of their learning process. One of these learning styles is the kinesthetic learning style which is the base of this study and will be an important concept for our investigation. Burker (1979) was the first author that used alternative learning perspectives through VAK strengths modalities theory, that consists in a

learning modality that can get power independently or in combination, the use of gestures, movements, and objects use.

Similar to Burkner, Gardner (1983) argues that Kinesthetic Learning is related to the solution of problems by using physical movements; people who have the ability to learn through this learning style, connect their mental abilities in order to coordinate their physical movements. As Gardner, Fleming & Mills (1992), related kinesthesia with an intuitive preference for the experimental and practical learning (simulated or real). It includes activities such as simulations, case analysis, practice and utilization, and the use of materials connected to the reality. In other words, Kinesthesia, which is one of the seven learning styles developed by Gardner (1983), involves the ability to learn through body movements or by using the tactile sense. In order to develop activities for the students, it is important to bring into account the material that they can touch such as puppets, plasticine, paint, etc. These kinds of materials help students to internalize information through the colors, the different shapes and textures.

### **3.2.2.1 Total Physical Response.**

Since kinesthetic learning involves all the physical movements, it is fundamental for our study the Total Physical Response (TPR) approach, which is a method used in order to teach vocabulary and language in general through physical movement as result of verbal input. In this approach, it is important for the instructors to give commands to learners in the target language and cause physical responses from the students with whole-body actions to these commands (Asher, 1977). Similar to Asher, Richards (2001) agrees that TPR must be given in the target language and also consider TPR approach as the method assembled by the connection between speech and action, which uses motor

activities in view to teach language. In order to have a wide definition of this approach, it is also considered that this approach is confirmed by items that are given through the target language such as orders, instructions and commands which require a physical response from the students. Also, TPR presents a considerable emphasis to comprehension compared to other teaching methods (Richards & Schmidt, 2010). With this definition in mind, we can say that Total Physical Response is a method used in order to teach language or vocabulary through activities that combine verbal instructions and physical movements. In this way, this approach facilitates to students the comprehension of new words and their uses.

#### **3.2.2.2 Psychomotor Domain.**

Taking into consideration that we talk about learning through movement, it is important to include some other concepts as the psychomotor domain which, as Simpson (1972) says, it is established by physical skills related to coordination, artistry and handling; also, by actions that proves the correct use of instruments or directly the use of the body in dance or athletic activities. Although Harrow (1972) agrees to Simpson about that Psychomotor Domain involves locomotor movements, he also says that Psychomotor Domain also contains the non-locomotor movements and manipulative movements. As well as Simpson, Richards & Schmidt (2010) assure that the principal objective of the psychomotor domain is the development of students' motor and coordination abilities and skills based on Bloom's Taxonomy that created six levels from knowledge to evaluation including knowledge comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. For these reasons, we can define psychomotor domain as the ability to be conscious of the own body and to get new knowledge through movements and the use

of the sense of touch in activities that make students to improve their locomotor or physical skills by using strategies to learn vocabulary at the same time. Since our project will be developed in Colombia, it is considered fundamental the perception of kinesthetic learning for authors that have developed studies in this country.

### **3.2.2.3 Kinesthesia in Colombia.**

Kinesthesia is related to the mind power more than teaching techniques. When we use activities and material in order to develop the physical and mental abilities of the students, this method becomes in an instrument that is useful not only to teach a specific subject but to develop body abilities in the students. Verle (1991), assures that in a traditional classroom in Colombia, all the information is given only with words and numbers, in other words is an abstract word where the professors have the knowledge and do not allow students to explore with their physical abilities the acquirement of information. Additionally, as mentioned before by several authors, this methodology includes the correct use of multidimensional materials in order to facilitate the learning process of students (Chalisa 2000, as cited in Giraldo & Bedoya , 2006). For these materials, it is important to take into consideration that the essential objective of creating these materials is to facilitate the learning process of the students by using their senses and their previous experiences in order to provide them an appropriate and meaningful input according to the age and interest. The importance of the use of realia in this methodology, help to students to learn naturally and in this way, enhance their integral development and also their motivation in the language learning process. Some of the successful activities use in a Colombia context includes “My Eyes, Nose, Mouth, and Ears” song pointing at the parts of the face, designing of face using magazines, draw their families (Sanchez & Garcia, 2013).

### **3.2.3 Content and Language Integrated Learning.**

Nowadays in Colombia, the use of an approach that integrates content to English language lessons is considered as a tendency in order to facilitate the process of the students in all the subjects that the Ministry of Education has included in the curriculum for students from transition to eleventh grade. Coyle (2007) defines Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) as an umbrella term adopted by the European Network of Administrators which encompasses all the activities that use a foreign language as a tool in the learning of a content subject, thus both language and subject are joined. Similar to Coyle, Marsh & Frigols (2012) argues that CLIL involves methodologies that allow teaching content subjects through a foreign language. They also say that this approach leads to an authentic learning, where the attention is focused on both topic and language of instruction. These definitions are strongly connected with the perception of Richards and Schmidt (2010) who stated as examples studying subjects such as science, social studies or mathematics through using as a medium English in a content-based ESL program. Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) refers to teaching subjects such as science, mathematics, arts, etc., by using a foreign language as an instrument where the role of both content and language can vary depending on the objectives and necessities of the learners and institutions.

#### **3.2.3.1 Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS).**

The principal objective of learning a language is to have the ability to communicate and interact with other people. Cummins (1984) defined this concept as a set of fundamental language abilities that are necessary for social situations and in the day-to-day interactions. On the other hand, Baker (2006) claimed that BICS is associated not only



to the use of verbal language but also it is included the use of contextual supports and props for language that secure the understanding, for example, gestures and the use of body language. Meanwhile, Bylund (2011) agrees with Cummins when he argues that BICS are a series of skills that are included during an interaction between two or more people where are presented aspects of the language such as vocabulary and pronunciation. As part of the society, it is fundamental to have the ability to interact with other people, since to communicate our thoughts and feelings is one of the most important human needs. The use of nonverbal language plays an important role at the moment of communicating, that is why it is essential to develop a basic communication language skill that include the basic vocabulary which allows the language users to have a successful communication.

#### **3.2.3.2 Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP).**

Different from BICS, CALP refers to the academic language that is used in a context reduced. In this situations in which are necessarily higher order thinking skills such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, language changes from being basic and general to a more elaborate and formal form (Baker, 2016). Similar to this definition, Cummins (1984) mentioned that this term refers to formal academic learning where are included listening, speaking, reading, and writing related to a subject which is essential for the students to learn. In addition, Bylund (2011) argues that CALP is associated with language skills that facilitate to the learners to process and understand a language that is presented in limited situations and that requires meaningful engagement in order to develop academic tasks. For students, it is important not only to learn vocabulary

related to the subject presented but also to acquire abilities that are more cognitively demanding such as inferring, evaluating or synthesizing.

### **3.2.3.3 CLIL in Colombia.**

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is a methodology that has been adopted by many countries and that has as the main purpose to reach bilingualism. In Colombia, the Ministry of Education proposed a suggested curriculum in which CLIL appears as an option for the institutions that are moving toward bilingualism. The implementation of this project has provoked a series of arguments against CLIL since it implies a long process and, also, some factors such as teacher training, and materials' development (Bonces, 2011). Similar to Bonces, Mariño (2011) claimed that, although this approach is being applied in many schools, there are aspects such as lesson planning, teacher training, and the necessary balance between content and language that do not allow CLIL to be completely effective for many other institutions. On the other hand, McDougald (2009) argues that, in Colombia, people tend to consider that bilingualism is strongly connected to the quality of education, for this reason, parents have the desire of sending their children to study abroad. With the recently suggested curriculum proposed, the Ministry of Education has as the main purpose to promote bilingualism in the country. This project includes a complete and clear description related to the standard proficiency and the assessment standards to facilitate the institutions to start the implementation of this curriculum.

## **4. Methodology**

### **4.1 Context**

This classroom project was developed in a Kindergarten institution named Semillero de Amor located in Dosquebradas in a medium sector with stratum three. This educational institute has three journeys, two in the morning that goes from 8:00 am until 12:00 m, the second one that goes from 8:00 am until 4:00 pm and in the afternoon from 1:00 pm until 5:00 pm. With thirty-two students and three teachers and having three classrooms, the kindergarten started its educational functions one year ago.

### **4.2 Setting**

Semillero de Amor does not have a PEI but presents an English curriculum. Currently, the institution does not have any project in development. The English classes are given one hour per day and students count on didactic materials such as flashcards, games, visual items, etc. The institution has three teachers who are content teachers. The kindergarten teacher is graduated from Childhood Education which includes basic notions of the English language to teach it in primary schools.

### **4.3 Participants**

#### **4.3.1 Students.**

The participants of this classroom project were Kindergarten students between four to five years old from one classroom with five students in total from Semillero de Amor. They were beginner English users who were exposed to one hour of English class per day so they presented basic English proficiency. Based on the information shared by the teacher in the first interview, the learners presented interest in the English

classes and they were active and motivated to learn new things by using materials that facilitate their learning process.

#### **4.3.2 Practitioners.**

The ninth semester practitioners who carried out this classroom project switched roles (observers and teachers) in which one day, the observer took notes while the other taught vocabulary through kinesthetic activities.

#### **4.4 Instructional Design**

Content and Language Integrated Learning is an approach in which different subjects, or elements of the subject, are taught through a second language with diverse purposes (Marsh, 1994). Our focus was on the implementation of kinesthetic activities such as dancing, painting, puppets, etc., in order to teach vocabulary to kindergarten students combined with contents such as science and healthy lifestyle, that were related with the language (vocabulary) and presented to the students during the implementation of this classroom project. For this project, it was considered important to develop these activities by using a model that allowed us to implement the lessons in a flexible and coherent order.

ESA model, (see appendix A), is based on three main steps, the first is engage which uses different activities that includes the students' preferences and emotions to involve them in the new topic or vocabulary. The second step is study; in this step the new information is presented to the students in order for them to understand how this new information is constructed regarding grammar, vocabulary or pronunciation. Finally, in the activate stage students practice the information provided in order to

internalize it and evaluate their understanding (Harmer, 1998). For our project, it was essential to present the new vocabulary through activities that engaged the students in the lesson, also, it was fundamental for the students to understand the structure and pronunciation in order for them to learn how to use this new information and developed the activities proposed by the teacher.

#### **4.5 Implementation**

The implementation of this classroom project was developed in eight lessons with a length of forty-five minutes. At the beginning of the implementation, we did an observation in order to collect information about the students' needs, behaviors and preferences. To engage our students, we presented new vocabulary through kinesthetic activities by using puppets to teach animals through some games, dancing to teach parts of the body and to teach secondary colors we will use realia. These activities motivated students to participate and to be ready to acquire the content, also they were created taking into account the previous knowledge and the students' background. In the study part, we presented the new words, teaching not only the word but also the pronunciation through a series of kinesthetic activities supporting them with visual material.

Some of the topics that we covered through the eight lessons were animals, secondary colors and parts of the body through science, values, geometric shapes through mathematics, etc. To show the animal vocabulary in the engaging element, we used an activity connecting the animal sound with the new word in the target language. Additionally, we showed a song about the animals that we taught, pronunciation was corrected, and students created associations between the word and the sound. To present the parts of the body, we presented some flashcards to teach the new vocabulary. To

teach the colors vocabulary, we presented some flashcards with the new lexicon and also we used realia to provide students context. In the second element, study, we used some flashcards in which animals were shown while the teacher taught the name of the animals and let students repeated them. For the parts of the body, we used a song in which students had to dance and sing relating the movements with the part of the body.

And, for the colors, teachers provided to students a drawing with numbers and colors and guided by the implementers, students learned the secondary colors. Finally, in the activate stage, students internalized the new vocabulary through practice, the mistakes were allowed since in that way we could reinforce the words with another study stage by following the content. To practice animal vocabulary, we developed a game (hot potato) in which some students acted as the animals, in the activate part for the parts of the body, learners played twister game in which implementers told them commands such as “right hand on eyes” and they had to do it. In the colors vocabulary, we implemented a series of activities using as content the planets, students had to paint and combine the primary colors to obtain the secondary.

#### **4.6 Assessment**

In this section, assessment was essential as it provided the tools to evaluate and measure the impact on student's vocabulary of teaching it through kinesthetic activities. According to Richards and Schmidt (2010), assessment is the way in which information is collected systematically in order to have control about the progress of students regarding their abilities, and also to determine the effectiveness of the strategies and techniques used during the learning process. We use formative and summative assessment to assess students. Concerning formative assessment, we provided

expressions such as good work, great job, awesome, excellent, etc, in order to motivate students and recognize the performance during the activities developed for our students, using kinesthetic assessment giving the command orally and students make the movement in that way, students incorporate movement to validate their understanding of the instruction, topics, and activities. Moreover, we used self-reflection assessment that students will make in Spanish by answering questions that we asked orally, on the other hand, to incorporate the summative assessment, we graded students using emojis or faces when the activities require it. Students were assessed with a series of tasks such as games, matching, guessing, questions and answers, etc. in order to evaluate the learning process and the understanding of the vocabulary.

#### **4.7 Reflection**

The reflection of our classroom project “Teaching Vocabulary through Kinesthetic Activities” was developed by using three instruments to reflect which were observations, journals, and students’ artifacts.

##### **4.7.1 Observations.**

As pointed out by Wragg (2013) observation is a systematic teacher and evaluation appraisal, in which the main focus is to develop professional skills of initial trainers. In the implementation of this classroom project, observations were developed during the eight classes implemented. Observations papers were essential to have an evidence of the students' learning process and the effect in the implementation of kinesthetic activities such as painting, dancing and modelling clay. Additionally, the observations contribute to the reflection of the implementers related to the lexical

acquisition of the students and the results in the use of methodologies and strategies implemented during the process.

#### **4.7.2 Journals.**

Also known as learning log, is defined by Richards & Schmidt (2010) as the exercise of writing in a notebook experiences related to the situations and activities developed in learning environments to reflect about the responses and reactions to methodologies and strategies used during the learning process. It was considered necessary to implement this instrument for every lesson to have a record of the learners' progress. The practitioners wrote the journals to reflect on the activities developed in the classroom and the process not only on the development of lexicon in students but the professional growth of the practitioners during the implementation process.

#### **4.7.3 Students Artifacts.**

As evidenced in Teaching Tip: Learning Artifacts (2013) learning artifacts or learning objects, are the instruments that allow one to prove the learning of the students and to identify when the students are using the language correctly or the misconceptions that they can have during the learning process. This instrument contributed to the results of this classroom project since it exposed the performance of the students in the activities developed for the implementers and by using this instrument, implementers have analyzed the ability of students to understand and follow instructions.



## 5. Results

Although at the beginning of the sessions it was difficult to figure out how to teach early young learners through kinesthetic activities, during the process we developed strategies that allowed us to improve our professional skills. With respect to factors such as the rapport established with the students, the creativity to plan classes, the use of different strategies to teach vocabulary and the use of technology, we increased our professional awareness and learned how to implement sessions with dynamism, in such a way that students learned indirectly by doing.

### 5.1 Linguistic Outcomes

The development of the linguistic ability of the students was observable when they participated and repeated vocabulary related with family members, colors, geometric shapes, etc. For example, in the fourth section in which vocabulary related to environment was taught, at the fourth repetition of the words, learners started to repeat the vocabulary; also, in the sixth section students started to recognize and say the new vocabulary associated with emotions, and at the end of the class, they said the words associated with the emotions they wanted to draw in the last stage of the class. Additionally, the students used body movements to demonstrate their understanding of the new words; for example, when we taught emotions, when we said happy, sad, angry, students responded by making the corresponding facial expressions. In activities in which students had to draw by following the instructions of the implementers, students showed understanding not only of the instructions but of the vocabulary used, such as “father”, “mother”, “sister”, “brother” For instance, in the implementation number seven, in which family vocabulary was taught, students produced and correctly

## TEACHING VOCABULARY THROUGH KINESTHETIC ACTIVITIES

pronounced the English words corresponding to each family member when we showed them flashcards and drilled the pronunciation, Although at the beginning of the classes students were receptive but not very participative with respect to use of the language, during the sessions they started to be more confident with the language and with us.

During the implementation number six, we played the video twice and all the students participated during the activity moving, dancing, and making facial expressions related with the emotions. During the activate stage, we reviewed vocabulary by using flashcards and all the students said each emotion such as happy, angry, hungry sad. One of the strategies of our project was recycling language. During all the classes, the topics were connected since we reviewed the vocabulary such as colors, shapes, and family members, that we had already taught.

While students were painting and drawing, they used and recycled the language that they already knew. For instance, student #1 having in one of the classes been exposed to the word “pink” said to us, “Necesito el color pink”. During the classes, we saw evidence in the use of TPR activities in which students used psychomotor movements to express understanding in the second language. For example, instead of saying “triangle”, they made a triangle with their hands in order to express their understanding of the meaning of the word. Also, teachers reinforced the new vocabulary by using their own gestures and body language and, in that way, instructions and concepts were easier for us to produce and for students to understand.

As we could see in the following photo taken during one of the implementation session, children correctly followed instructions involving a game named Twister, in which they were commanded to execute certain bodily movements. The game was modified in order to connect it with the main objective of the session that was to

## TEACHING VOCABULARY THROUGH KINESTHETIC ACTIVITIES

recognize vocabulary related to body parts. This picture taken shows that students not only were engaged in the game but also they were following the commands provided by the implementers and recognizing the vocabulary. This demonstrates that students could recognize and show their understanding, not only through writing and speaking but also through psychomotor movements and kinesthetic activities.



**Body parts twister game; A3, A4, A5; 10/20th/2017.**

The use of images, shapes, and sounds in our classroom activities correlated with accurate performance of action commands and identification of L2 vocabulary. Thus, the results obtained during the implementation of this classroom project are highly connected with findings obtained in researches such as “Teaching English Vocabulary to Third Graders through the Application of the Total Physical Response Method” by Muñoz & Valencia (2011), who pointed out that teachers encouraged students to produce L2 by using familiar subjects and associating these with words in the target language.

## 5.2 Professional Growth

During the lessons implemented we noticed an improvement in students' motivation in being part of the class and in their learning process. For instance, in most of the sessions students were very attentive, following instructions, and expressing gratitude to the implementers. Our experience working with kindergarten students was limited, but during the process we improved significantly in establishing good relations with the learners. We believe that improvements such as the correct use of the tone of voice, facial expressions, and body language helped the students to increase their confidence and rapport with us. Additionally, the use of activities such as Twister to teach body parts, while assigning to each color a body part image, helped students to connect colors and psychomotor movements with body parts, and helped us to be conscious of the importance of taking into consideration the role of fun and imagination when working with young learners.

During the implementations, the reflection after each session facilitated the improvement of aspects such as planning, design, and implementation of activities. We improved these three aspects during each session by taking notes about aspects of the class such as the way we gave instructions, activities that went well and did not go well, and then we included these notes in observation reports and journals. We reflected about aspects to improve throughout the process. In the following journal entry, the rapport established between the implementers and the students, and the way in which this empathy contributed to the learning of the vocabulary taught is evidenced. The implementer 2 mentioned that in the third session students showed more empathy with us and highlighted the importance of this for the development of this specific lesson:

JR#3; Implementer 2; September 28th/ 2017

“When we as teachers perceive that students are engaged during all the class, it is really satisfying to notice the interest and the motivation of students. Students showed empathy with us which has been an essential factor during the implementation. It could be demonstrated that this time all of them retained the vocabulary related to primary and secondary colors, what is comforting to see that the activities implemented have been getting positive results”.

The kinesthetic activities, such as the games carried out during the implementation of the lessons, seemed to facilitate understanding of the new lexis. In the fourth lesson, for instance, we taught vocabulary related to environment, and in the last stage a memory game was implemented in which we taught implicitly the vocabulary, and students used the new words to play the game. This finding supports the study developed by Hursen and Salaz (2016) who argued that the implementation of games and dynamic activities improved not just students' lexical range, but also teachers' classroom management.

### **5.3 Students' Responses.**

Although in the first sessions students did not follow instructions, they improved their understanding since we started to give clearer instructions by providing examples using gestures, body movements, and using simple words and cognates; for example, words for family members and colors, “silence”, “repeat”, etc. Since students ages were from three to six years old, there were some disciplinary issues in which students lost the focus of the class and started to speak of other personal subjects that they wanted to share with us. We resolved these issues by using Spanish and by motivating them to participate without interrupting the class. Regarding their responses to the activities

## TEACHING VOCABULARY THROUGH KINESTHETIC ACTIVITIES

carried out in each session, students tended to be more active in the last stage, as is explained in one of the observation reports written by the implementer number #1.

OR #1; Implementer 1; September 14th/ 2017

“Nevertheless, in the last stage (activate) in which a kinesthetic activity was developed (hot potato), children were more conscious about the class, participating when the teachers asked and recognizing the animals named”

We saw that students responded well to kinesthetic activities such as games of Twister, memory, and charades, and modelling clay. For example, in the session number six, in which the objective was to recognize words related to emotions, we had students play a game called charades where students had pieces of paper with the names of emotions on their foreheads and their classmates had to give clues in order for them to guess the words. In this case students showed interest, participating in the game, except for the student #4 who did not want to be part of the class that day. During the game, students spoke all the time by using English words such as happy, sad, angry, hungry learnt during the class.

Klimova (2012) argued that the use of visual materials such as posters, flashcards, and videos combined with activities in which students need to use body movements facilitate students' retention of vocabulary. During the implementation of this project, new vocabulary was presented when we used visual tools and implemented activities in which students needed to use body movements. For example, in some sessions we used videos to introduce new vocabulary. In the session in which we taught body parts, we used a video called “head, shoulders, knees and toes” which shows some animated

**TEACHING VOCABULARY THROUGH KINESTHETIC ACTIVITIES**

animals that dance and point to each body part. Students followed the movements presented during the video, and also, they tried to say the vocabulary words.

## **6.Reflection**

This classroom project allowed us to show results associated with the use of kinesthetic activities to teach vocabulary in kindergarten students. One of the most fundamental aspects when deciding to implement this project was the age of students, since in this case they did not even have the ability to write and read. For this reason, we considered essential the use of dynamic activities, and colorful visual aids that could be appropriate for the age and the abilities of the students. Additionally, during the implementation we applied different instructional techniques like accommodating our speech and body language based on students' level and ages. Based on the results we perceive that the use of images, shapes, and sounds reinforced vocabulary understanding; and the use of different kinesthetic activities such as drawing, dancing, painting, and games like "twister" helped students to associate physical movements and vocabulary.



## 7. Conclusion

The implementation of kinesthetic activities in a kindergarten institution seemed to have a positive impact on the students learning process since they involved not only the use of psychomotor movements, but also the use of the new vocabulary and the ability to follow instructions. According to Hursen and Salaz (2016), the use of games helps teachers to achieve their aims, and also to make tasks authentic. By means of this project we observed that the use of games was an important consideration in planning our objectives, taking into account students' ages and our desire to motivated them. The use of the ESA model was also positive since it is sequential which allows students to anticipate the steps of each class (presentation of the topic, study, and practice). Due to the students' ages and language level, we implemented kinesthetic activities such as games in which they could learn language by having fun and connecting the vocabulary with body movements. Additionally, in order to facilitate students' learning, recycling the vocabulary played a fundamental role since students could make connections between their previous knowledge and the new words introduced.

## 8. Appendices

## 8.1 Appendix A

## LESSON PLAN

<b>Date of the class:</b> September 14th/ 2017 1:00 pm- 1:45 pm		<b>Class Number:</b> 1	
<b>AIM:</b> At the end of the lesson the learners will be able to: Recognize the domestics animals and say the animals’ names			
<b>Estándares Básicos de Competencias (MEN):</b>  <b>Estándar General:</b> Asocia imágenes con sonidos de palabras relacionadas con animales domésticos.  <b>Estándares Específicos:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Reconoce y pronuncia en inglés el vocabulario relacionado con animales domésticos.</li><li>● Asocia las palabras en inglés que escucha con imágenes relacionadas con animales domésticos.</li><li>● Participa activamente de las actividades kinestésicas.</li></ul> <b>Indicadores de logro:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Reconoce los animales domésticos en Inglés y sus sonidos.</li><li>- Utiliza el lenguaje corporal para imitar animales domésticos.</li><li>- Participa en juegos como hot potato para demostrar conocimiento de los animales domésticos.</li><li>- Relaciona el sonido y/o acciones de los animales con su respectivo significado en Inglés.</li></ul>			
<b>Assumed Knowledge:</b>			
<b>Materials: Flashcards, song, speaker, an object to play hot potato.</b>			
<b>DAY/ STAG E/ ACTI VITY/ TIME</b>	<b>PROCEDURE TEACHER AND LEARNER ACTIVITY</b>	<b>ANTICIPATED PROBLEMS AND PLANNED SOLUTIONS</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
<b>10 min</b>	<b>Engage:</b> Teachers will play a song related to domestic animals and they will show the flashcards when each animal is mentioned	There may not be internet connection, so the teachers will download the song	

## TEACHING VOCABULARY THROUGH KINESTHETIC ACTIVITIES

<p><b>15 min</b></p>	<p><b>Study:</b> Teachers will present students flashcards with each domestic animal, teachers will say the name of the animal and students will repeat.</p>	<p>to have it prepared for the lesson.</p> <p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RWmqzB9dmsQ">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RWmqzB9dmsQ</a></p> <p>Students may be afraid to repeat aloud each animal name, so teachers will engage them being friendly and encouraging them to participate.</p>	
<p><b>15 min</b></p>	<p><b>Activate:</b> Teachers will explain the hot potato activity in which students have to pass an object one to another until the song stops. Then, the teacher will say an animal and the student who has the object has to make the sound of the animal or an action related to it.</p>	<p>Students may not understand the instructions of the game, so the teachers will give an example of the game and, they will motivate students to participate actively.</p>	
<p><b>EXTRA-CLASS WORK, ANNOUNCEMENTS, THINGS TO CONSIDER:</b></p> <p><b>Task:</b></p>			
<p><b>REFLECTION SESSION:</b></p>			
<p><b>Observations</b></p>			

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